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House of Representatives

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ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH
CONGRESS

JAMIE FLEET, MINORITY STAFF DIRECTOR

February 15, 2012

The Honorable Daniel E. Lungren
Chairman
Committee on House Administration
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Lungren:

We are writing to urge you to convene the Committee on House Administration to conduct oversight hearings on the increasing role and influence of undisclosed money in our electoral system. Recent polling shows that more than three-quarters of voters think that campaign finance reform is a key issue for the country. The Committee should exercise its jurisdictional oversight on behalf of the American people.

Campaign finance reform is one of the most important areas under our Committee's jurisdiction and it is past time that we held hearings on this issue in the 112th Congress. In 2010, two Supreme Court cases, the infamous *Citizens United v. FEC* and the less famous *Speechnow.org v. FEC*, dramatically changed the campaign finance landscape under which we had operated for decades. As a result, a select group of wealthy individuals and corporate donors have funneled millions of undisclosed dollars into our elections by means of the independent-expenditure-only committees known as "Super PACs". In the 2010 election cycle, Super PACs spent more than \$90 million, 75% of which was spent by just 10 Super PACs alone. Just one Super PAC, American Crossroads, spent \$25.8 million, or 28% of Super PAC spending in 2010.

We have now seen more than 300 Super PACs register with the Federal Election Commission. During 2011, 10 Super PACs were responsible for approximately 72% of all Super PAC spending. Half of the funds controlled by Winning Our Future, a Super PAC supporting Newt Gingrich, came from one family alone. The \$30.2 million raised and \$6.6 million spent by Restore Our Future Super PAC, created to support Mitt Romney's presidential bid, accounted for approximately 30% of all Super PAC fundraising and led all Super PACS in spending. We were troubled to see multiple contributions of \$1 million each to Restore Our Future from companies such as Spann LLC, a corporation created a month before the contribution and dissolved shortly thereafter simply to disguise the source of the money. This type of unseemly transaction calls out for a hearing and we hope that you will schedule one promptly.

To combat the invidious effect of undisclosed donations, we joined our colleague, Representative Chris Van Hollen, in introducing H.R. 4010, the DISCLOSE 2012 Act, to return true disclosure to the spending of outside groups. DISCLOSE 2012 has been referred to the Committee on House Administration as the primary committee of jurisdiction. We need and the American people have demanded increased disclosure. Allowing outside groups to significantly influence our elections through anonymous donations sells America short. This Congress promised more transparency and has to yet deliver. Let's start now with a hearing on DISCLOSE 2012.

The American people deserve to know who is financing their elections. Disclosure is only an alarming concept to those with something to hide. In the 111th Congress, the House passed similar disclosure legislation, as reported by our Committee. It is time for this Committee to continue that important work.

Sincerely,



Robert A. Brady



Zoe Lofgren



Charles A. Gonzalez